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(B-1)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- FORMER CIA DIRECTOR STANSFIELD TURNER SAID TODAY THE B-1 BOMBER IS AN OBSOLETE "EXPENSIVE MILITARY TOY" AND IS NOT THE WAY TO GO TO STRENGTHEN U.S. DEFENSES.

BUT REP. ROBERT DORNAN, R-CALIF., A FORMER AIR FORCE PILOT, CALLED THE BOMBER "STILL THE MOST MAGNIFICENT AIRCRAFT ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH."

DEFENSE SECRETARY CASPAR WEINBERGER IS HEARING A DECISION ON WHICH BOMBER AMERICA SHOULD BUILD FOR THE FUTURE. AN UPDATED VERSION OF THE B-1, WHICH WAS CANCELED BY PRESIDENT CARTER, IS ONE OPTION AS WELL AS A CRASH PROGRAM FOR BUILDING A NEW RADAR-THWARTING STEALTH BOMBER.

WEINBERGER ARRANGED TO START MEETING WITH CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS, INCLUDING SENATE ARMED FORCES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JOHN TOWER, R-TEXAS, THIS WEEK TO DISCUSS THAT TOPIC.

BOTH TURNER AND DORNAN COMMENTED IN INTERVIEWS THIS MORNING ON NBC'S "TODAY" SHOW.

TURNER SAID HE IS "CONVINCED WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING TO STRENGTHEN OUR STRATEGIC NUCLEAR FORCES. I THINK THE B-1 IS THE WRONG WAY TO GO. FIRST, BECAUSE IT'S AN OBSOLETE SYSTEM; SECONDLY BECAUSE THERE ARE BETTER SYSTEMS AVAILABLE AND AVAILABLE MORE RAPIDLY THAN THIS."

HE SAID THE UNITED STATES HAS ENOUGH STRATEGIC NUCLEAR POWER TODAY "TO RETALIATE IF WE WERE ATTACKED AND I BELIEVE WE HAVE ENOUGH TO DETER THE SOVIETS FROM EVER BELIEVING THEY COULD SUCCESSFULLY CONDUCT A FIRST STRIKE AGAINST US AND GET AWAY WITH IT WITHOUT SUFFERING UNACCEPTABLE DAMAGE TO THEMSELVES."

TURNER, WHO WAS CIA DIRECTOR DURING THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, SAID HE IS "VERY CONCERNED WE WILL LOSE SOME OF THE PUBLIC ENTHUSIASM (PRESIDENT) REAGAN HAS GENERATED FOR A STRONGER DEFENSE" IF THE B1 IS CHOSEN.

"IF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC IS SACRIFICING SOCIAL PROGRAMS ON THE ONE HAND AND BUYING WHAT APPEARS TO THEM AT LEAST AN OBSOLESCEING SYSTEM THAT IS AN EXPENSIVE MILITARY TOY, THEY'RE GOING TO LOSE THIS SUPPORT," HE SAID.

BUT DORNAN SAID HE HAD FLOWN THE B-1 FOR SIX HOURS "AND I CAN ASSURE THE ADMIRAL IT IS NOT A TOY. IT IS STILL THE MOST MAGNIFICENT AIRCRAFT ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH AND WILL BE...FOR ABOUT FOUR OR FIVE YEARS TO COME."

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